



GREAT BIRDING PROJECTS



An approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing

24 December 2019

Season's Greetings!

Wishing you the best of the season, as well as health, peace, and nature's solace in 2020!



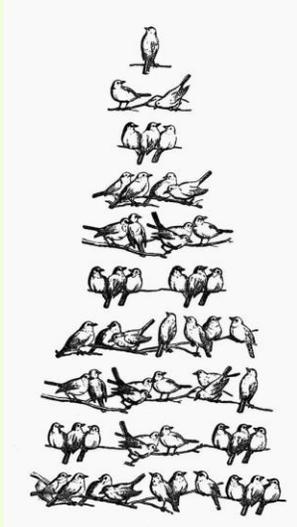
The Birds' Christmas Tree

Bird-Lore, the unofficial magazine of the Audubon movement in the early part of the 20th century, provided this attractive Christmas gift card in 1915 to those people who purchased subscriptions of the magazine as gifts for family members and friends.
(Image courtesy the Eddie Woodin Collection)

Americans have been feeding wild birds for well over 100 years, but very few people have followed the history and development of that popular pastime. In *Feeding Wild Birds in America: Culture, Commerce, and Conservation* by Paul J. Baicich, Margaret A. Barker, and Carrol L. Henderson (Texas A & M University Press, flexbound), you can appreciate how bird feeding evolved, from decade to decade, and you will get insights into little-known stories of feeding development. These include the invention of the hopper feeder, the "discovery" and use of such seeds as black oil sunflower and Nyjer,

the creation of the tube feeder, the evolution of hummingbird feeding, and why hemp (very popular through the 1920s) is no longer commonly fed to birds.

Most importantly, you can learn to connect the past with current developments in bird feeding. Included in the book's conclusion are the "top ten bird foods for bird feeding" and the "five steps to double the number of bird species at your feeders," a tight summary of over a century of bird-feeding experience.

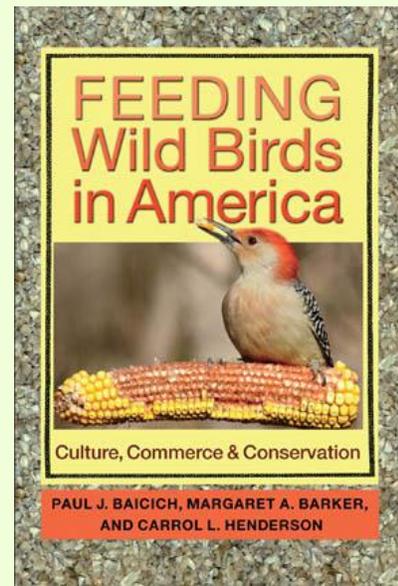


The winter season, especially this holiday season, is an ideal time to re-connect with our bird-feeding history. Note, for example, the Christmas-tree drawing of birds to the left, an illustration from a children's schoolbook in the 1870s. Yes, the 1870s! Indeed, a combination of this season and the appreciation of birds goes back a long way!

If you want a copy of *Feeding Wild Birds in America: Culture, Commerce, and Conservation*, you can send \$25 to Paul J. Baicich at P.O. Box 404, Oxon Hill, MD 20750. This includes postage and handling, but add \$1.50 for sales tax if you live in Maryland. (The book has a list

price of \$27.95, so this current holiday price is kept as low as possible)

At the same time, if you wish to invite one of the three book authors to a reading, a short talk at a garden or bird club, or a full presentation at a nature/bird festival, you can contact [Margaret A. Barker](#).





Cuban Trogon by Laura Gooch

A Cuba Connection Opportunity in February

**Hiking light, Birding light, Spanish Light
- throughout the Cuban countryside!
Sunday, Feb. 16 - Friday, Feb. 28, 2020**

This 12-day experience is uniquely designed for curious conservationists, interested birders, and amateur ecologists who want to interact meaningfully with a variety of Cuban nature specialists, archaeologists, biologists, historians, and artists, while at the same time giving support to Cuban civil society.

Conservation and conversation come together to deepen our understanding of Cuban Nature, Cuban Culture, and the Cuban people.

Join Cuba's national campaign to protect the environment while visiting uniquely beautiful natural areas. Emphasis is on gaining an appreciation of birds, nature, conservation, creative eco-tourism, and the work that Cuban naturalists are doing to protect and nourish the environment in Cuba. We will engage in light hiking in protected areas while practicing our Spanish (not a prerequisite) with our Cuban friends who work in the private sector of conservation and avian research. (We will also sample the new trends in creole and international cuisine with Cuba's growing private sector.)

The tour will visit the bio-rich areas of Las Terrazas, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve; the beautiful Viñales Valley and National Park, with its unique hiking and birding opportunities; the Ciénaga de Zapata, an immense swamp and bird habitat; and, of course, Old Havana with its fascinating urban ecology.

This delegation is in support of the Cuban people as permitted by the U.S. Treasury Department, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). We have an intense itinerary with a strong focus on meaningful interaction with our Cuban counterparts through formal and informal meetings. The delegation is run by [The Friendship Association](#) of St. Augustine, Florida, (a 501 (c) (3) non-profit charity). The delegation co-leaders will be Soledad Pagliuca and Paul Baicich.



Our goal is to help you understand more about conservation in Cuba, especially with regard to the environment, endangered species, birds, and nature in general, while brushing up your Spanish and giving support to Cuban civil society. Another goal is to assist our independent Cuban naturalist colleagues in their work; the delegation will bring optics, a selection of feeders, books, and educational materials to Cuba.

The cost of \$3,500 includes transportation to and from Cuba; Cuban visas; medical insurance in Cuba; ground transportation within Cuba; hotels (starting in Ft. Lauderdale) and Cuban bed and breakfasts; all group meals in Cuba; and entrance fees. Limited to ten people. You can access all the details you need here:

<https://friendshipassociation.org/2020-february/>

If you have been to Cuba before, you may want to visit again; Cuba is in transition, and things are changing all the time. Also, if you have been there before, we would appreciate your passing this particular February opportunity on to interested friends and colleagues.

Words to Consider:

"There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. ...Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech."

- Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (1947)



GBP - what we do...

Great Birding Projects is a vehicle to promote a creative approach to bird-related editing, education, eco-tourism, and marketing. GBP functions as a bridge to an innovative engagement between people and birds.

